அரக்கனா! அரசனா? – The life of Mine

thelifeofmine3.wordpress.com/2024/05/09/book-2/

May 9, 2024

Ramayana, originally authored by Valmiki, was later translated into Tamil by Kambar, resulting in what is known as “Kambaramayanam.” This version is often praised for its heightened poetic beauty compared to the original.

In his rendition of Ramayana, Kambar drew from Tamil literature and infused it with Tamil culture, enriching the narrative with an additional layer of flavor and depth. This integration enhanced the overall experience of comparing the two versions.

People often perceive the story of Ravana primarily through the lens of North and South Indian perspectives. However, historical accounts reveal that the tale of Ravana exists in various languages worldwide, sparking numerous debates about the potential historical reality of Ravana and Rama’s conflict. Despite extensive discussion, definitive evidence regarding the identity of the real Ravana remains elusive. Some interpretations suggest that Ravana could have been a Tamil king or possibly associated with the Pandian dynasty. These discussions transcend Hinduism, encompassing diverse languages, cultures, and religions such as “Budha Ramayanam”. While some regard the Ramayana purely as a mythological narrative, others believe it to be a historical account. Communities in Sri Lanka, Nepal, and North India often cite geological evidence to support the events depicted in the Ramayana, such as Rama’s exile to the forest for 14

years and the construction of temples attributed to him. Notably, the existence of Rama's Bridge (Adam's Bridge) is frequently highlighted as significant evidence in contemporary debates.

Embarking on the Journey of Ramayana:
Once, during the 14 years of exile, Rama, Lakshmana, and Sita encountered a girl named Surpanakha, who was Ravana's sister.Surpanakha, captivated by Rama's beauty and majestic presence, proposed marriage to him. Rama declined her proposal, leading to an argument. Witnessing the altercation, Lakshmana intervened, perceiving Surpanakha as a threat to his brother's safety. In a rash act, he injured her by cutting off her nose, a severe indignity for a woman inflicted by a man. While this action may seem unjust, Lakshmana acted out of concern for Rama's well-being. In the Ramayana, every character has their own perspective and motivations. Surpanakha's cries of pain echoed far to Lanka, alerting Ravana to his sister's distress. To Ravana, Surpanakha was not only a sibling but also a revered member of the royal family of Lanka.

Welcoming the Arrival of Ravanan:
In those times, inter-caste marriages were common, yet Ravana's parents, hailing from different gotras, set an example with their union. Ravana, born to a father of Brahma's lineage and a mother from the Asurar's gotra, had siblings like Surpanakha, Guberan, Kumbakarane and Vibhishan. Ravana exemplified unwavering loyalty and protection towards his family, particularly his sister Surpanakha, whom he cherished deeply. Renowned for his martial prowess, Ravana's valor was evident in his many battles. Despite his mother's plea for peaceful resolution through prayers to Lord Shiva, Ravana's inclination towards warfare was strong. However, his encounter with Shiva's grace transformed him into a devout devotee, particularly through in Tamil, where he's sometimes revered as a Tamil deity. Ravana prioritized education and self-motivation in his quest to become a fervent devotee of Lord Shiva, and his dedication bore fruit through divine blessings.

Their is the situation saying where Ravana's mother calls him for "amodunnawada" (which means "come and taste the food") to which Ravana replies, "amudha Venda ma, Tamilundu varukiran" (which means "I don't need food, I am going to learn Tamil"). This saying highlights Ravana's preference for Tamil over heavenly food, symbolizing his deep connection and devotion.

People often assert that Ravana belonged to the Pandian dynasty, although not everyone agrees. However, Ravana's adherence to his beliefs cannot be disputed without evidence. The Pandians held significant influence, spreading Tamil language and culture, particularly in Kumari Kandam, the ancient land connecting Tamil Nadu and Sri Lanka. Consequently, Ravana is often regarded as a Pandian or Tamil king, earning titles like "Nilavalankiya Tamil Mannan." Revered for his multifaceted greatness as a ruler, brother, father, husband, friend, and warrior and great enemy, Ravana's devotion to his mother, Kaikasi, was unparalleled. She gifted him a necklace with nine pearls at his birth, which he cherished until death, earning it the name "Spadigai Malai." Each pearl reflected his

face, leading to the epithet “Ten-faced Ravana.” Numerous tales delve into the significance of his ten faces, adding depth to his character.

Ravana’s Devotion to Lord Shiva (Samagana veda):
Ravana’s deep reverence for Lord Shiva is a captivating tale. Legend has it that Ravana, born into the asura lineage, displayed extraordinary devotion to Shiva. He constructed a lingam out of sand, offering fervent prayers and receiving abundant blessings in return. One remarkable episode recounts Ravana’s pilgrimage to Kailash during Shravan. Upon reaching the divine abode in his celestial vehicle, he was barred entry by Nandi, Shiva’s guardian. Incensed, Ravana attempted to uproot Kailash itself to take it with him. However, Parvati intervened, Shiva pressing him under the mountain with her divine power.

During his ordeal, Ravana found solace in a hymn sung by Thirunavukkarasar, by which ravana transformed his head, shoulder and veins into a musical instrument Veena. Playing this instrument, Ravana pacified Shiva, who eventually granted him release and bestowed blessings upon him. Through unwavering devotion and determination, Ravana’s tale serves as a testament to the power of faith and humility before the divine.

The Meaning Behind the Name ‘Ravana’:
1. Ravana’s name can be dissected into “ra” and “vanan,” where “ra” signifies forest and “vannan” conveys a darker complexion, portraying him as a man of dark color associated with the forest.
2. Another interpretation suggests that “ir” and “vanana” implying Ravana’s supreme authority over Shiva.
3. Another interpretation suggests that “Ravanan” implies “more beautiful” compared to others.

Continue…